

## Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 OMB-01 NIC-01 IO-14 PC-04 DRC-01

/140 W

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P R 012030Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5198

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0837

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: CONTINUING POLITICAL REVERBERATIONS IN WAKE PENAL  
REFORM

REF: BA-0677 AND BA-0810

1. SUMMARY: IN AFTERMATH BITTER DEBATE ON PENAL REFORM LAW,  
POPULAR CONSERVATIVE SENATOR HAS RESIGNED FROM FREJULI BLOC,  
MID APPEARS TO BE HOPELESSLY SPLIT AND UCR CONTINUES TO PRO-  
TEST AMENDMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. SENATOR ALBERTO FONROUGE, PROMINENT POPULAR CONSERVATIVE  
(VICENTE SOLANO LIMA'S PARTY) AND SECRETARY OF FREJULI BLOC IN  
SENATE, RESIGNED LATTER POSITION JAN 30, REPORTEDLY AS RESULT  
OF SHARP DIFFERENCES WITH PERONIST SENATOR JOSE H. MARTIARENA,  
WHO LEADS FREJULI BLOC. COMING SO CLOSE ON HEELS OF OTHER DEFEC-  
TIONS RESULTING FROM AMENDMENTS TO PENAL CODE, FONROUGE'S  
RESIGNATION IS WIDELY BELIEVED ALSO TO HAVE BEEN PROMPTED BY  
DISSATISFACTION OVER WAY IN WHICH REFORM LAW WAS HANDLED. IN  
ANY EVENT, IT REVEALS ANOTHER SMALL CRACK IN WHAT HAD BEEN SOLID  
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FREJULI BLOC. IT MUST ALSO ADD TO DIFFICULTIES SOLANO LIMA

HIMSELF IS CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING.

3. AS RESULT REFUSAL OF EIGHT MID DEPUTIES TO VOTE FOR AMENDMENTS, THAT PARTY MAY NOW BE IRRECONCILABLY SPLIT. FRONDIZI RESPONDED TO MARTIARENA'S INSISTENCE THAT HE DISCIPLINE EIGHT MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY WHO REFUSED TO VOTE FOR AMENDMENTS (SEE BA-0677) BY TOSSING BALL BACK TO MARTIARENA. AS IT WAS BLOC DISCIPLINE RATHER THAN THAT OF PARTY WHICH VIOLATED, FONDIZI MAINTAINED, IT WAS BLOC AND NOT PARTY WHICH MUST SANCTION OFFENDERS. (NOTE: UNDER RULES, SENATORS AND DEPUTIES ARE SUPPOSED TO VOTE WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE BLOCS RATHER THAN IN ACCORDANCE INDIVIDUAL CONSCIENCE. IF THEY DO NOT, SANCTIONS CAN BE IMPOSED AGAINST THEM, INCLUDING EXPULSION FROM BLOC--THOUGH NOT FROM CONGRESS). THIS RELIEVES FRONDIZI OF RESPONSIBILITY BUT LEAVES FATE OF EIGHT MID DEPUTIES SQUARELY IN HANDS OF PERONIST MAJORITY IN BLOC. THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO ACCEPT CALMLY ANY SANCTIONS RAISED AGAINST THEM AND MAY BOLT BLOC, IF NOT INDEED MID ITSELF. THERE HAS LONG BEEN POTENTIAL SPLIT IN MID BETWEEN "DEVELOPMENTALISTS" LED BY ROGELIO FRIGERIO, AND MORE TRADITIONAL POLITICIANS SUCH AS GOV SYLVESTRE BEGNIS OF SANTA FE. ISSUE OF VOTE ON PENAL REFORM APPEARS TO HAVE BROUGHT SPLIT TO A HEAD. EIGHT WHO OPPOSED BELONG TO "DEVELOPMENTALIST" GROUP.

4. VARIOUS MEMBERS OF UCR ALSO CONTINUE TO GROUSE ABOUT AMENDMENTS TO PENAL CODE. RAUL ALFONSIN (WHO WITHIN A FEW MONTHS WILL AGAIN CHALLENGE BALBIN FOR PARTY LEADERSHIP) ON JAN 28 PUBLICLY DESCRIBED AMENDMENTS AS "THREAT TO ARGENTINE DEMOCRACY." ALFONSINISTAS ARE MOST FIRMLY OPPOSED, BUT THOSE IN BALBIN'S WING ARE ALSO DISTURBED. THEY WANT TERRORIST PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED ONCE AND FOR ALL, BUT AS HAS LONG BEEN EVIDENT, THEY FEAR PERONIST RIGHT WING MORE THAN LEFT AND ARE CONCERNED THAT RIGHT WING ELEMENTS WILL MISUSE AMENDMENTS, POSSIBLY AIMING THEM AT ANYONE WHO OPPOSES RIGHT RATHER THAN MORE NARROWLY AT TERRORISTS THEMSELVES. UCR POSITION IS THAT GOA COULD COME TO GRIPS WITH TERRORIST PROBLEM AS WELL WITHOUT THE AMENDMENTS AS WITH THEM IF IT REALLY WISHES TO DO SO; HENCE, THEY ARE UNNECESSARY. DESPITE OPPOSITION ON THIS ISSUE, HOWEVER, UCR NOT LIKELY TO ABANDON ITS POSITION OF COOPERATING WITH PERONISTS ON OTHERS.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** LAW, PARTY STRENGTH, PENAL REFORM, PARTY DISSENSION, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 01 FEB 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974BUENOS00837  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** BUENOS AIRES  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Line Count:** 107  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** RM  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 04 SEP 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <04 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <10 DEC 2002 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CONTINUING POLITICAL REVERBERATIONS IN WAKE PENAL  
**TAGS:** PINT, AR, (FONROUGE, ALBERTO)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005